

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LA PAZ 01468 152210 Z

66- S-60

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-14 NSC-10 NSCE-00 SSO-00 CCO-00

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9316

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 1468

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EMIN ECON PFOR BL

SUBJ: REPORTED PLAN TO SELL STRATEGIC STOCKPILES

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. JUST A FEW MINUTES AFTER I WAS INFORMED BY TELEPHONE FROM WASHINGTON OF THE SEVERAL ARTICLES APPEARING IN TODAY' S PRESS REPORTING A MASSIVE PLAN TO DISPOSE OF US STOCKPILES, INCLUDING TIN, LEAD, ZINC, SILVER AND OTHER COMMODITIES OF IMPORTANCE TO BOLIVIA, FOR THE AVOWED PURPOSE OF " DRIVING DOWN THE WORLD PRICES", THE SUB- SECRETARY OF FONAFFAIRS CALLED TO EXPRESS HIS GRAVE CONCERN OVER THIS REPORT, WHICH HE HAD JUST RECEIVED FROM AMBASSADOR VALENCIA IN WASHINGTON, AND ASKED SPECIFICALLY IF I COULD ISSUE A DENIAL SO THAT I COULD REASSURE THE PRESIDENT, THE FONMINISTER AND THE MINISTER OF MINES WHO WERE SHOCKED AND DISMAYED BY THIS NEWS WHICH THEY FEAR COULD ONLY AFFECT ADVERSELY AND TO A GREAT DEGREE THE INTERESTS OF BOLIVIA. WE WERE ONLY ABLE TO REPLY THAT WE TOO HAD JUST RECEIVED THE REPORT, THAT IT CAME AS A SURPRISE, AND THAT WE HAD NO FURTHER INFORMATION. (END UNCLASSIFIED)

BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL

2. I NEED NOT REPEAT IN DETAIL THE EXTREME SENSITIVITY IN BOLIVIA OVER ANY INDICATIONS THAT PLANS ARE AFOOT TO SELL STRATEGIC RESERVES, ESPECIALLY TIN WHICH IS THE LIFEblood OF
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PAGE 02 LA PAZ 01468 152210 Z

THIS COUNTRY. MOREOVER, THE TERMS IN WHICH THE REPORTED PLAN TO SELL WERE PUT IN THE NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE WHICH WAS READ TO ME-- TO DRIVE DOWN WORLD PRICES AS AN ANTI- INFLATIONARY MEASURE AND TO KEEP US SPENDING WITHIN BUDGETARY LIMITS-- COULD NOT PUT IT IN THE WORSE LIGHT FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A POOR COUNTRY SUCH AS BOLIVIA. SHOULD THIS COME TO PASS IN THE WAY REPORTED, BOLIVIANS WILL LOOK UPON IT AS A CALLOUS, BRUTAL AGGRESSION AGAINST THEIR INTERESTS AND WE MAY HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES AS RESULT THEREOF.

3. I HOPE THE DEPARTMENT CAN INFORM ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE OF THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER, AND I EXPRESS THE SINCERE HOPE THAT ANY PLAN TO DISPOSE OF STOCKPILES OF INTEREST TO THIS COUNTRY WILL NOT BE TAKEN WITHOUT AT LEAST SERIOUS ADVANCE CONSULTATIONS WHICH WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY PROMISED. (END CONFIDENTIAL)
SIRACUSA

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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